

Paul asks congressional leaders to stop new regulations *Fisheries regs will hurt Texas shrimpers, snapper fishermen*

FOR

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, March 11, 1998 WASHINGTON, DC - In a letter to Rep. Harold Rogers of Kentucky, Chairman of the Appropriations sub-committee responsible for funding the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) has asked him to include language in an upcoming appropriations bill which would stop the NMFS from implementing more stringent rules such as season closures, reductions in allowable catch (TAC) and Bycatch Reduction Devices (ByRDs). If passed the language would stop such measures from being enforced in 1999.

Paul has said he would communicate with House Leadership about his strong desire to have this language included in FY99 appropriations.

In addition, Paul said he is continuing to pursue cosponsors for legislation he will introduce to overturn ByRDs if the Commerce Department promulgates that regulation. But he added that, "the language which I am proposing here (in the letter) is an additional safeguard, it is a very realistic and pragmatic request for a Congress which is very much concerned by the administration's attempts to pass burdensome new regulations."

"If we fail to get this language included I will definitely raise the stakes in this battle; if we are unsuccessful here I will immediately propose legislation to repeal in its entirety the Magnuson/Stevens Act," said Paul, referring to the legislation which allows the Commerce Department to promulgate these regulations.

"It is time for Congress to step up and take responsibility - our constituents will accept nothing less - NMFS has been waging a war on both the snapper and shrimp fisheries, and we need to say 'enough is enough'. The old bureaucratic strategy of pitting recreational against commercial, and shrimper against snapper fishermen, must end, and must end now. We need to tell NMFS now 'No New Regulations', not on our snapper fishermen, not on our shrimpers, not on anyone."